

### Dr. Aziz Madi, 32, Jordanian

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Participated in the Train the Trainer Program between March and July 2014

Went to Cologne University of Applied Sciences, Campus Gummersbach

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### Dr. Madi, you have been in Gummersbach for four months – which experience has made a lasting impression?

So many! It was my first time in Germany and I was received very warmly. The atmosphere was open and there were a lot of international influences, similar to in Amman. The culture shock was therefore not too great.

### You teach Marketing – which differences could you observe between the approaches taken in Jordan and in Germany?

The biggest difference is the character of the consumers. There are two important aspects: Firstly, the German clients are more concerned about quality, whereas the people in Jordan are more concerned with the price. Secondly, German society is very individualistic. My home country still operates on the model of

the extended family. Peer pressure is much stronger, even when it comes to purchasing decisions.

### You gave courses for Bachelor and Master Degrees. Are the German students also different?

Definitely; they are more interested in discussions, and in exchanging opinions. They also have a lot more freedom in their degrees than the students in Jordan. Here in Germany, I also taught engineering students who naturally had a different focus from that of the business students in Amman. It was an unusual challenge, and an interesting experience from which I learnt a lot. In that last semester we had around 150 German students – I now understand much better which expectations they have.

### What other positive impact will your experience in Germany have upon your teaching in the future?

In Amman, our approach certainly has a very practical dimension. However, here in Germany practice plays a much stronger role. Part of my work here was to improve my knowledge of the simulation software. In the future, I want to integrate its practical aspects into a seminar about Corporate Strategy.

You mentioned that the culture shock wasn't too great. Did you experience any exchange of cultures during your time here?

Yes, that was very interesting. One example was when the students organised a festival with a lot of music which I participated in. I play the Oud, which is a traditional instrument, similar to a lute.

Part of the exchange programme which you participated in was learning the German language. How useful was your stay here in facilitating this?

Well I can manage daily interactions... however I still want to continue learning German in order to improve the communication with the 50 German-speaking colleagues in Amman. I have definitely learnt a lot of very nice German words: "genau" ("exactly"), "richtig" (correct), or also "glücklich" (happy): A strange word.

### Strange?

It doesn't sound like a word which expresses this state of being. But it is good to practice on, if one wants to learn German pronunciation.

